Employers' Advisers

The Employers' Adviser

Volume 3 **Summer 2002**

A quarterly newsletter of the Employers' Advisers Office, Compensation Advisory Services, Ministry of Skills Development & Labour, Government of British Columbia. The Employers' Advisers Office provides advice, assistance, representation and training on all aspects of Workers' Compensation.

Please pass this on to the person handling your WCB issues.
For further information on the Employers' Advisers Branch please call (604) 713-0303 or 1-800-925-2233

Check out our website

www.labour.gov.bc.ca/eao

Important WCB Remittance Due Dates

2nd Quarter..... Jul 20, 2002
3rd Quarter ..... Oct 20, 2002
4th Quarter ..... Jan 20, 2003

Remember to complete the form even if your assessable payroll is nil - DO NOT LEAVE BLANKS. Late Penalty of 8% applies (minimum $25.00)

BILL 56 1ST READING IN BC LEGISLATURE

Bill 56 will receive 3rd reading this Fall. The intent of Bill 56 is to reduce the levels of review and appeal of WCB decisions from 3 to 2. Bill 56 creates a new internal review function to improve the quality of decision making and establishes a new, independent appeal tribunal as the final level of appeal for workers' compensation matters. Those interested should check it out at on the internet at: http://www.labour.gov.bc.ca/news/2002/2002-008.htm

More work and/or consultation before legislative change covering these topics may be introduced in the fall of 2002 or spring 2003

- OH & S Regulation
- Occupational disease compensation
- Survivor benefits
- Compensation for chronic pain

For more information go to www.labour.gov.bc.ca/wcbreform/

Bill 49: Legislative Changes to the WCB Act!

On May 13, 2002, the Provincial Government introduced legislation to amend the Workers Compensation Act of BC effective June 30, 2002. What are the changes?

- WCB Board of Directors will have 7 voting directors total. Representatives: 1 worker, 1 employer, 3 public interest, 1 actuary, 1 health care/disability rehab.
- Compensation rate for injured workers changed to 90% of net wages from 75% of gross wages. Takes into account income tax, EI and CPP to arrive at a net figure.
- Long term wage review performed at 10 weeks instead of 8 weeks with emphasis on prior one year earnings.
- Inflation indexing on benefits once/year at 1% less than CPI increase with 4% cap. Was twice/year with no cap. Survivor indexing unchanged.
- WCB pension benefits reduced by 50% the CPP benefits collected for the same condition/disability. Could receive both at 100% before.
- Pensions will continue to be determined on the dual system. Permanent functional impairment pensions will be the norm, loss of earnings pensions in exceptional circumstances.
- Pensions will cease at age 65 in most cases and a lump sum post-retirement benefit will be paid. Lump sum is a 5% annuity with option for worker to contribute up to another 5%.
- Post traumatic stress and mental claims more clearly defined. Chronic stress not covered.
- WCB must provide a service plan by March 31 each year to Minister.

Issue	BC	Alberta	Ontario	Provincial Range
WCB Board of Directors (employer/worker reps)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Compensation rate	90% net	90% net	85% net	75% - 90% net
Annual Inflation indexing	Annual CPI minus 1% (4% cap)	Annual CPI minus .5%	Annual .5CPI minus 1% (4% cap)	Annual Ont. Formula to Full CPI
Reduction for CPP Benefits	50%	0%	100%	0% to 100%
No loss of earnings but permanent disability	Monthly payment to 65	Lump sum	Lump sum	Lump sum
Post-retirement benefit after age 65	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lifetime pensions	No	No	No	No except NWT
Mental stress - Coverage is provided for post-traumatic	YES	YES	YES	YES